

Arlington Human Rights Commission
Minutes, November 16, 2016
Jefferson Cutter House, 8:00

Present: Chair Christine Carney and Commissioners Wendy Bell, Marlissa Briggett, Ghanda DiFiglia, Sharon Grossman, Gary Horowitz, Christopher Huvos, William Logan, and Nick Minton

Absent: Commissioners Sheri Baron and Mel Goldsipe

Guests: Joseph Schwartz, Rebekah Swartz

Citizen's Open Forum: none

AHS Trip to South Africa: Up to 30 students will go to South Africa in February, partnering with the social outreach club of a high school in South Africa. Commissioner Briggett moved to allocate \$250 to defray expenses, seconded by Commissioner Horowitz. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes: The minutes from October 20, 2016 were reviewed. Commissioner Minton moved to accept the minutes; seconded by Commissioner Briggett. The motion passed. All voted in favor, with Commissioners Bell and Grossman abstaining.

Budget for FY17: Tabled.

Incidents & Complaints: We received no incidents/complaints from the police department. We received one e-mail about a third-party harassment issue. Chair Carney reported that Commissioner Goldsipe spoke with Capt. Julie Flaherty at APD and asked them to offer our services to the victim. Capt. Flaherty told Commissioner Goldsipe that the victim appreciated the offer, but that she had moved from the location where the harassment was happening and didn't need any help from AHRC at this time.

Commissioners Goldsipe and Bell exchanged tweets with another Arlington resident who felt that a neighbor had a potential complaint. The resident was going to talk to her neighbor.

Pantsuit Nation group has a Boston chapter. A woman from Arlington posted that someone said something derogatory while driving by. Someone suggested she contact the AHRC. Chair Carney will reach out to her.

Commissioner Briggett will reach out to the Attorney General's office to see if we can get information about any Arlington-related incidents that come into the hotline and to let them know that we exist should people wish to file a complaint and/or simply reach out to us.

Subcommittee Reports: Commissioner Goldsipe had brainstormed ideas for the Arlington project and her notes were disseminated.

Homelessness Task Force has not met. Commissioner Horowitz is on the task force and believes they will meet in the new year.

The person helping with the data analysis for the LGBTQ+ survey is moving away. Commissioner Goldsipe needs help.

School Liaisons: Commissioner Huvos discussed issues relating to the METCO program and the training program. Commissioner Grossman wondered whether the cultural competency consultant who is doing the work at the high school could do the training instead.

Commissioner Grossman talked to Paul McKnight and is reviving the idea of having high school ex-officio members of HRC.

Commissioner Grossman wants to share the AHRC liaisons for each of the schools at the December 20, 2016 Superintendent's Diversity Advisory Group agenda and asked that Commissioner Minton bring the list to that meeting. She will bring the list to the next AHRC meeting to update.

Commission Openings: There are a couple of applications. The application deadline has been extended.

AHRC Priorities: Tabled until Commissioner Goldsipe is present.

HRC Municipal Index: This is a score given out by national organization the Human Rights Campaign that reflects a town's commitment to LGBTQ+ issues. Arlington scored a 61 originally. The town gave more information (including, e.g., the updated by-laws) and the score increased to 81. The town's deficiencies were identified and there are clear areas where we can improve. The Town Manager is planning to submit a warrant article to establish a Pride Commission for LGBTQ+ issues.

True Story Theater Updates: Commissioner Huvos went to the fundraiser at ACA. Commissioner Bell will be the liaison for the rest of the year and next year. Commissioner Carney will see if we need a backup liaison.

Superintendent's Diversity Advisory Committee Update: Commissioner Minton reported the last meeting addressed hiring issues. Commissioner Minton shared information about the makeup of new hires, current teachers, teaching assistants, computer technicians, bus drivers and bargaining unit members. The Advisory Committee were told that the administration is disappointed in their efforts but that they are frustrated by a small pool of candidates and less competitive salaries. There was discussion regarding that this has been the same reason articulated for the lack of diversity hiring in the school system for many

years. Commissioner Briggett asked whether there was data regarding teachers who had left to see if there was a disproportionate number of teachers of color who move on.

Commissioner Grossman said that it'd be interesting to know about the district's attention to the mentoring program, which is now required by law. At the superintendent's meeting Commissioner Goldsipe expressed that asking staff of color to mentor new staff of color (which would be in addition to the regular mentorship) should be compensated by the district, and that it should be acknowledged that this is extra work being asked of staff of color beyond what white staff are asked to do. She also noted that the leaders of cultural competency trainings should come from outside the Arlington school district.

The discussion turned toward the METCO program. Commissioner Grossman says that in Wellesley there's one late day a month where the kids from Boston can invite a kid to school and another day where they go to a host family's home. Commissioner Huvos will discuss this idea with Margaret Thomas. Commissioner Grossman suggested that we could bring this and other diversity issues up with the School Committee, perhaps at a joint meeting. Many School Committee members are concerned about diversity issues and have indicated a desire to work with us on them. Chair Carney will talk to the Chair of the School Committee about a possible meeting.

MLK Celebration Planning: Commissioner Grossman moved that we allocate up to \$50 for the MLK celebration. Commissioner DiFiglia seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Discussion ensued regarding reaching out to the MLK committee to see if they wanted us to have a more active role.

Community Events: Chair Carney reported that there is an international potluck and a peace vigil, both taking place in Melrose. Commissioner Briggett brought up the letter-writing campaign as something to keep in mind for the next time a letter to the editor is necessary. Commissioner Horowitz went to the Inside Out project reception at the Ottoson School where Commissioner Goldsipe spoke about AHRC's work and the role of the arts in promoting understanding among diverse populations. Chair Carney can no longer attend the monthly MAHRC meetings. She'll send out the next agenda. Various commissioners indicated they could pick up occasional Friday morning meetings.

Commissioner Horowitz moved to adjourn, Commissioner Logan seconded that, and all voted unanimously to adjourn.

Submitted by Marlissa Briggett, Commissioner